

Sobonya, David P.

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From: McCartney, Anthony [REDACTED]  
Sent: Friday, February 07, 2014 3:21 PM  
To: FOIPARrequest  
Subject: FOIA Request - Pete Seeger  
Attachments: 2014 - Pete Seeger FBI FOIA request.pdf

Good afternoon,

Please see the attached FOIA request, which seeks FBI records on Peter "Pete" Seeger.

Thank you for your assistance and please call me if there is any additional information that you need from me.

Anthony

Anthony McCartney  
AP Entertainment Writer  
Cell: [REDACTED]  
Office: [REDACTED]  
Fax: (213) 687-1053  
Twitter: [REDACTED]

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11 FEB 2014

**AP**

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www.ap.org

Attn: FOI/PA Request  
Record/Information Dissemination Section  
170 Marcel Drive  
Winchester, VA 22602-4843

Facsimile: (540) 868-4391/4997

Dear FOIA Officer:

Pursuant to the federal Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, I request the following information: **all records related to Peter "Pete" Seeger, born on May 3, 1919 and who died on Jan. 27, 2014.**

I would like to receive the information in electronic format.

I am making this request as a reporter with The Associated Press and this request is made as part of newsgathering and not for commercial use. As a representative of the news media I am only required to pay for the direct cost of duplication after the first 100 pages.

I ask that you waive any and all applicable fees associated with this request. Through this request, I am gathering information on Seeger's life and government investigations him. Release of this information is in the public interest because it will contribute significantly to public understanding of government operations and activities, particularly the FBI's investigations and information it collected on Seeger. If you deny this request for a fee waiver, please advise me in advance of the estimated charges if they are to exceed \$100.

If my request is denied in whole or part, I ask that you justify all deletions by reference to specific exemptions of the Act. I will also expect you to release all segregable portions of otherwise exempt material. I reserve the right to appeal your decision to withhold any information or to deny a waiver of fees.

As I am making this request as a journalist and the information is of timely value, I would appreciate your communicating with me by telephone at [redacted] or e-mail [redacted] rather than by mail, if you have questions regarding this request

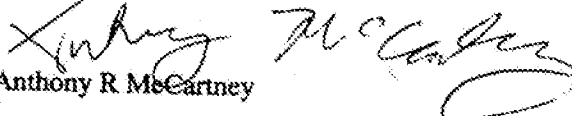
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Finally, I note that President Obama's January 21, 2009 "Presidential Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies on the Freedom of Information Act" specifically stated that "[i]n responding to requests under the FOIA, executive branch agencies should act promptly and in a spirit of cooperation, recognizing that such agencies are servants of the public." Moreover, it held that "[a]ll agencies should adopt a presumption in favor of disclosure, in order to renew their commitment to the principles embodied in FOIA, and to usher in a new era of open Government. The presumption of disclosure should be applied to all decisions involving FOIA."

In the spirit of such cooperation and the presumption of disclosure, I look forward to your prompt response.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

  
Anthony R. McCartney

Entertainment Writer, The Associated Press

Phone: 

Email: 

b6

**AP**

# The Big Story

## Folk singer, activist Pete Seeger dies in NY

By MICHAEL HILL and CHRIS TALBOTT

— Jan. 28, 2014 4:01 AM EST

Home » Pete Seeger » Folk singer, activist Pete Seeger dies in NY



File—This Sept. 21, 2013, file photo shows Pete Seeger performing on stage during the Farm Aid 2013 concert at Saratoga Performing Arts Center in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. The American troubadour, folk singer and activist Seeger died Monday Jan. 27, 2014, at age 94. (AP Photo/Hans Pennink, File)

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NEW YORK (AP) — Buoyed by his characteristically soaring spirit, the surging crowd around him and a pair of canes, Pete Seeger walked through the streets of Manhattan leading an Occupy Movement protest in 2011.

Though he would later admit the attention embarrassed him, the moment brought back so many feelings and memories as

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/folk-singer-activist-pete-seeger-dies-ny>

he instructed yet another generation of young people how to effect change through song and determination — as he had done over the last seven decades as a history-sifting singer and ever-so-gentle rabble-rouser.

"Be wary of great leaders," he told The Associated Press two days after the march. "Hope that there are many, many small leaders."

The banjo-picking troubadour who sang for migrant workers, college students and star-struck presidents in a career that introduced generations of Americans to their folk music heritage died Monday at the age of 94. Seeger's grandson, Kitama Cahill-Jackson, said his grandfather died peacefully in his sleep around 9:30 p.m. at New York Presbyterian Hospital, where he had been for six days. Family members were with him.

"He was chopping wood 10 days ago," Cahill-Jackson recalled.

With his lanky frame, use-worn banjo and full white beard, Seeger was an iconic figure in folk music who outlived his peers. He performed with the great minstrel Woody Guthrie in his younger days and wrote or co-wrote "If I Had a Hammer," "Turn, Turn, Turn," "Where Have All the Flowers Gone" and "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine." He lent his voice against Hitler and nuclear power. A cheerful warrior, he typically delivered his broadsides with an affable air and his fingers poised over the strings of his banjo.

In 2011, the canes kept Seeger from carrying his beloved instrument while he walked nearly 2 miles with hundreds of protesters swirling around him holding signs and guitars. With a simple gesture — extending his friendship — Seeger gave the protesters and even their opponents a moment of brotherhood the short-lived movement sorely needed.

When a policeman approached, Tao Rodriguez-Seeger said at the time he feared his grandfather would be hassled.

"He reached out and shook my hand and said, 'Thank you, thank you, this is beautiful,'" Rodriguez-Seeger said. "That really did it for me. The cops recognized what we were about. They wanted to help our march. They actually wanted to protect our march because they saw something beautiful. It's very hard to be anti-something beautiful."

That was a message Seeger spread his entire life.

With The Weavers, a quartet organized in 1948, Seeger helped set the stage for a national folk revival. The group — Seeger, Lee Hays, Ronnie Gilbert and Fred Hellerman — churned out hit recordings of "Goodnight Irene," "Tzena, Tzena" and "On Top of Old Smokey."

Seeger also was credited with popularizing "We Shall Overcome," which he printed in his publication "People's Song" in 1948. He later said his only contribution to the anthem of the civil rights movement was changing the second word from "will" to "shall," which he said "opens up the mouth better."

"Every kid who ever sat around a campfire singing an old song is indebted in some way to Pete Seeger," Arlo Guthrie once said.

His musical career was always braided tightly with his political activism, in which he advocated for causes ranging from civil rights to the cleanup of his beloved Hudson River. Seeger said he left the Communist Party around 1950 and later renounced it. But the association dogged him for years.

He was kept off commercial television for more than a decade after tangling with the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1955. Repeatedly pressed by the committee to reveal whether he had sung for Communists, Seeger responded sharply: "I love my country very dearly, and I greatly resent this implication that some of the places that I have sung and some of the people that I have known, and some of my opinions, whether they are religious or philosophical, or I

## EXPLANATION OF EXEMPTIONS

### SUBSECTIONS OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, SECTION 552

- (b)(1) (A) specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and (B) are in fact properly classified to such Executive order;
- (b)(2) related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency;
- (b)(3) specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than section 552b of this title), provided that such statute (A) requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on issue, or (B) establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld;
- (b)(4) trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;
- (b)(5) inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency;
- (b)(6) personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
- (b)(7) records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, but only to the extent that the production of such law enforcement records or information ( A ) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings, ( B ) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, ( C ) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, ( D ) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of confidential source, including a State, local, or foreign agency or authority or any private institution which furnished information on a confidential basis, and, in the case of record or information compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source, ( E ) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law, or ( F ) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual;
- (b)(8) contained in or related to examination, operating, or condition reports prepared by, on behalf of, or for the use of an agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions; or
- (b)(9) geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

### SUBSECTIONS OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, SECTION 552a

- (d)(5) information compiled in reasonable anticipation of a civil action proceeding;
- (j)(2) material reporting investigative efforts pertaining to the enforcement of criminal law including efforts to prevent, control, or reduce crime or apprehend criminals;
- (k)(1) information which is currently and properly classified pursuant to an Executive order in the interest of the national defense or foreign policy, for example, information involving intelligence sources or methods;
- (k)(2) investigatory material compiled for law enforcement purposes, other than criminal, which did not result in loss of a right, benefit or privilege under Federal programs, or which would identify a source who furnished information pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence;
- (k)(3) material maintained in connection with providing protective services to the President of the United States or any other individual pursuant to the authority of Title 18, United States Code, Section 3056;
- (k)(4) required by statute to be maintained and used solely as statistical records;
- (k)(5) investigatory material compiled solely for the purpose of determining suitability, eligibility, or qualifications for Federal civilian employment or for access to classified information, the disclosure of which would reveal the identity of the person who furnished information pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence;
- (k)(6) testing or examination material used to determine individual qualifications for appointment or promotion in Federal Government service the release of which would compromise the testing or examination process;
- (k)(7) material used to determine potential for promotion in the armed services, the disclosure of which would reveal the identity of the person who furnished the material pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence.

"I can't sing much," he said. "I used to sing high and low. Now I have a growl somewhere in between."

Nonetheless, in 1997 he won a Grammy for best traditional folk album, "Pete."

Seeger was born in New York City on May 3, 1919, into an artistic family whose roots traced to religious dissenters of colonial America. His mother, Constance, played violin and taught; his father, Charles, a musicologist, was a consultant to the Resettlement Administration, which gave artists work during the Depression. His uncle Alan Seeger, the poet, wrote "I Have a Rendezvous With Death."

Pete Seeger said he fell in love with folk music when he was 16, at a music festival in North Carolina in 1935. His half-brother, Mike Seeger, and half-sister, Peggy Seeger, also became noted performers.

He learned the five-string banjo, an instrument he rescued from obscurity and played the rest of his life in a long-necked version of his own design. On the skin of Seeger's banjo was the phrase, "This machine surrounds hate and forces it to surrender" — a nod to his old pal Guthrie, who emblazoned his guitar with "This machine kills fascists."

Dropping out of Harvard in 1938 after two years as a disillusioned sociology major, he hit the road, picking up folk tunes as he hitchhiked or hopped freights.

"The sociology professor said, 'Don't think that you can change the world. The only thing you can do is study it,'" Seeger said in October 2011.

In 1940, with Guthrie and others, he was part of the Almanac Singers and performed benefits for disaster relief and other causes.

He and Guthrie also toured migrant camps and union halls. He sang on overseas radio broadcasts for the Office of War Information early in World War II. In the Army, he spent 3½ years in Special Services, entertaining soldiers in the South Pacific, and made corporal.

He married Toshi Seeger on July 20, 1943. The couple built their cabin in Beacon after World War II and stayed on the high spot of land by the Hudson River for the rest of their lives together. The couple raised three children. Toshi Seeger died in July at age 91.

The Hudson River was a particular concern of Seeger's. He took the sloop Clearwater, built by volunteers in 1969, up and down the Hudson, singing to raise money to clean the water and fight polluters.

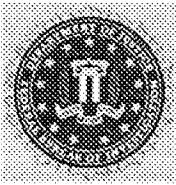
He also offered his voice in opposition to racism and the death penalty. He got himself jailed for five days for blocking traffic in Albany in 1988 in support of Tawana Brawley, a black teenager whose claim of having been raped by white men was later discredited. He continued to take part in peace protests during the war in Iraq, and he continued to lend his name to causes.

"Can't prove a damn thing, but I look upon myself as old grandpa," Seeger told the AP in 2008 when asked to reflect on his legacy. "There's not dozens of people now doing what I try to do, not hundreds, but literally thousands. ... The idea of using music to try to get the world together is now all over the place."

Associated Press writer John Rogers in Los Angeles and Mary Esch in Saratoga Springs in contributed to this report.

**DON'T MISS**

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/folk-singer-activist-pete-seeger-dies-ny>



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Washington, D.C. 20535

February 12, 2014

MR. ANTHONY R MCCARTNEY  
ASSOCIATED PRESS  
SUITE 300  
221 SOUTH FIGUEROA STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

FOIPA Request No.: 1252414-000  
Subject: SEEGER, PETE

Dear Mr. McCartney:

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.

A search of the Central Records System maintained at FBI Headquarters indicated that records potentially responsive to the FOIA have been sent to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Since these records were not reviewed, it is not known if they are actually responsive to the FOIA.

If you wish to review these potentially responsive records, send your request to NARA at the following address using file number 100-HQ-200845 as a reference:

National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road  
College Park, MD 20740-6001

By standard FBI practice and pursuant to FOIA exemption (b)(7)(E) and Privacy Act exemption (j)(2) [5 U.S.C. §§ 552/552a (b)(7)(E), (j)(2)], this response neither confirms nor denies the existence of your subject's name on any watch lists.

It is unnecessary to adjudicate your fee waiver because no responsive main file records were processed.

For your information, Congress excluded three discrete categories of law enforcement and national security records from the requirements of the FOIA. See 5 U.S.C. § 552(c) (2006 & Supp. IV (2010)). This response is limited to those records that are subject to the requirements of the FOIA. This is a standard notification that is given to all our requesters and should not be taken as an indication that excluded records do, or do not, exist.

You may file an appeal by writing to the Director, Office of Information Policy (OIP), U.S. Department of Justice, 1425 New York Ave., NW, Suite 11050, Washington, D.C. 20530-0001, or you may submit an appeal through OIP's eFOIA portal at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/efoia-portal.html>. Your appeal must be received by OIP within sixty (60) days from the date of this letter in order to be considered timely. The envelope and the letter should be clearly marked "Freedom of Information Appeal." Please cite the FOIPA Request Number in any correspondence to us for proper identification of your request.

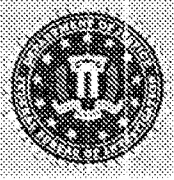
Enclosed for your information is a copy of the FBI Fact Sheet.

Sincerely,

David M. Hardy  
Section Chief,  
Record/Information  
Dissemination Section



Enclosure



## FBI FACT SHEET

- The primary functions of the FBI are national security and law enforcement.
- The FBI does not keep a file on every citizen of the United States.
- The FBI was not established until 1908 and we have very few records prior to the 1920s.
- **FBI files generally contain reports** of FBI investigations of a wide range of matters, including counterterrorism, counter-intelligence, cyber crime, public corruption, civil rights, organized crime, white collar crime, major thefts, violent crime, and applicants.
- **The FBI does not issue clearances or non-clearances for anyone other than its own personnel or persons having access to FBI facilities.** Background investigations for security clearances are conducted by many different Government agencies. Persons who received a clearance while in the military or employed with some other government agency should contact that entity. Most government agencies have websites which are accessible on the internet which have their contact information.
- **A criminal history summary check or "rap sheet" is NOT the same as an "FBI file."** It is a listing of information taken from fingerprint cards and related documents submitted to the FBI in connection with arrests, federal employment, naturalization or military service. The subject of a "rap sheet" may obtain a copy by submitting a written request to FBI, Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division, Record Request, 1000 Custer Hollow Road, Clarksburg, West Virginia 26306. Along with a specific written request, the individual must submit a new full set of his/her fingerprints in order to locate the record, establish positive identification, and ensure that an individual's records are not disseminated to an unauthorized person. The fingerprint submission must include the subject's name, date and place of birth. There is a required fee of \$18 for this service, which must be submitted by money order or certified check made payable to the Treasury of the United States. A credit card payment option is also available. Forms for this option and additional directions may be obtained by accessing the FBI Web site at [www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/background-checks/background\\_checks](http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/background-checks/background_checks).
- **The National Name Check Program (NNCP)** conducts a search of the FBI's Universal Index (UNI) to identify any information contained in FBI records that may be associated with an individual and provides the results of that search to a requesting federal, state or local agency. Names are searched in a multitude of combinations and phonetic spellings to ensure all records are located. The NNCP also searches for both "main" and "cross reference" files. A main file is an entry that carries the name corresponding to the subject of a file, while a cross reference is merely a mention of an individual contained in a file. The results from a search of this magnitude can result in several "hits" and "idents" on an individual. In each instance where UNI has identified a name variation or reference, information must be reviewed to determine if it is applicable to the individual in question.
- **The Record/Information Dissemination Section (RIDS)** searches for records and provides copies of FBI files responsive to Freedom of Information or Privacy Act (FOIPA) requests for information. RIDS provides responsive documents to requesters seeking "reasonably described information." For a FOIPA search, the subject's name, event, activity, or business is searched to determine whether there is an associated investigative file. This is called a "main file search" and differs from the **NNCP** search.

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[www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov)

might be a vegetarian, make me any less of an American."

He was charged with contempt of Congress, but the sentence was overturned on appeal.

Seeger called the 1950s, years when he was denied broadcast exposure, the high point of his career. He was on the road touring college campuses, spreading the music he, Guthrie, Huddie "Lead Belly" Ledbetter and others had created or preserved.

"The most important job I did was go from college to college to college to college, one after the other, usually small ones," he told The Associated Press in 2006. "... And I showed the kids there's a lot of great music in this country they never played on the radio."

His scheduled return to commercial network television on the highly rated Smothers Brothers variety show in 1967 was hailed as a nail in the coffin of the blacklist. But CBS cut out his Vietnam protest song, "Waist Deep in the Big Muddy," and Seeger accused the network of censorship.

He finally got to sing it five months later in a stirring return appearance, although one station, in Detroit, cut the song's last stanza: "Now every time I read the papers/That old feelin' comes on/We're waist deep in the Big Muddy/And the big fool says to push on."

Seeger's output included dozens of albums and single records for adults and children.

He appeared in the movies "To Hear My Banjo Play" in 1946 and "Tell Me That You Love Me, Junie Moon" in 1970. A reunion concert of the original Weavers in 1980 was filmed as a documentary titled "Wasn't That a Time."

By the 1990s, no longer a party member but still styling himself a communist with a small C, Seeger was heaped with national honors.

Official Washington sang along — the audience must sing was the rule at a Seeger concert — when it lionized him at the Kennedy Center in 1994. President Bill Clinton hailed him as "an inconvenient artist who dared to sing things as he saw them."

Seeger was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1996 as an early influence. Ten years later, Bruce Springsteen honored him with "We Shall Overcome: The Seeger Sessions," a rollicking reinterpretation of songs sung by Seeger. While pleased with the album, Seeger said he wished it was "more serious." A 2009 concert at Madison Square Garden to mark Seeger's 90th birthday featured Springsteen, Dave Matthews, Eddie Vedder and Emmylou Harris among the performers.

Seeger was a 2014 Grammy Awards nominee in the Best Spoken Word category, which Stephen Colbert won.

Seeger's sometimes ambivalent relationship with rock was most famously on display when Dylan "went electric" at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival.

Witnesses say Seeger became furious backstage as the amped-up band played, though just how furious is debated. Seeger dismissed the legendary tale that he looked for an ax to cut Dylan's sound cable, and said his objection was not to the type of music but only that the guitar mix was so loud you couldn't hear Dylan's words.

Seeger maintained his reedy 6-foot-2 frame into old age, though he wore a hearing aid and conceded that his voice was pretty much shot. He relied on his audiences to make up for his diminished voice, feeding his listeners the lines and letting them sing out.